



**Linda S. Adams**  
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Environmental  
Protection*

## *NEWS RELEASE*

### **California Regional Water Quality Control Board Central Valley Region**

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**Arnold  
Schwarzenegger**  
*Governor*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **California Department of Transportation Faces Half Million Dollar Penalty for Storm Water Violations in Placer County**

SACRAMENTO –The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) faces penalties of \$524,100 for violating the department's construction storm water permit at the State Route 65 Lincoln Bypass Project in Placer County.

The Administrative Civil Liability Complaint was issued by the Executive Officer of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board as authorized by the California Water Code. Under the California Water Code, the maximum possible liability for the violations was \$3.1 million. The penalty was reduced after several factors were considered, including the fact that the dischargers installed and operated a water treatment system in late February.

Caltrans is responsible for the construction and management of the Bypass Project, a four-year undertaking to construct 12.8 miles of new freeway with nine bridge crossings.

During the 2008 to 2009 rainy season, Regional Water Board staff members observed numerous storm water problems at the site, including very turbid (muddy) discharges to Auburn Ravine.

At a minimum, these discharges contributed to violations of receiving water quality objectives in the storm water permit. In addition, the California Department of Fish and Game determined that the discharges were harmful to fish and other aquatic life. Sections of Auburn Ravine provide spawning and rearing habitat for Chinook salmon and steelhead.

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board is a California state agency responsible for preservation and enhancement of water quality. The Board may consider the complaint at its regular public board meeting on October 7, 8, or 9, 2009.